4VAC15-40-195

Game: In General: Visiting traps, generally; visiting completely submerged, body-gripping traps; use of remote trap check systems.

Summary:

The proposed updates remote trap check system requirements to incorporate the use of certain types of camera-based systems.

Proposed language of amendment:

4VAC15-40-195. Visiting traps, generally; visiting completely submerged, body-gripping traps; use of remote trap check systems.

A. Except as provided in subsections B and C of this section, it shall be unlawful to fail to visit all traps once each day and remove all animals caught.

B. Body-gripping traps that are completely submerged by water must be visited at least once every 72 hours.

C. Remote trap checking systems may be used in lieu of a physical trap visit when such systems (i) have a control unit or remote camera that reports trap status to a centralized application ~~database~~ at least once every 24 hours; (ii) ~~have notifications alarms that report~~ provide notifications of trap closures or activity at the trap site and system health issues within one hour of detection via email or ~~and~~ text-based messaging systems; and (iii) have on-demand ~~control unit testing~~ capabilities for determining ~~trap status,~~ signal strength~~,~~ and battery condition via remote system check-in. If the control unit reports a trap closure or the camera sends a photo with an animal in a trap, the user is required to physically visit the trap within 24 hours of the time the trap was reported closed, or the photo was received. If the control unit or camera fails to report its current status within a 24-hour check-in period or reports a system health issue, the user is required to physically check the trap within 24 hours of the last ~~time an open trap signal was received~~ communication with the device.

Rationale:

In 2015, a provision was added to allow certain types of remote trap check systems to be used in lieu of a physical trap check. Since that time, there have been considerable technological advances in these systems, particularly among camera-based trap monitoring systems. These camera-based systems do not fit cleanly into the current language describing allowable systems, despite being more versatile and widely available. Electronic trap check and camera systems conforming to standards proposed in this regulation ensure that trap status is reliably determined and allows for quicker detection and removal of animals in traps.